

News from the board

Reflections on October Board - Anna Bradley

23 October 2019 | Anna Bradley

It's only a month to go to our new Standards and Regulations come into effect, after more than four years of consultation and development. But of course, it's the start rather than the end of the journey, so the Board began the day with a really good workshop on the details of how we evaluate the impact of our reforms. That will be a priority for us for some years to come. We also had a useful session on what sort of reporting Board would like in future, looking at using a balanced scorecard.

New work programme

The formal Board meeting saw us approve our work programme for 2019/20, which we will be publishing shortly.

As well as a focus on evaluation, some of our priorities for next year include further work developing the Solicitors Qualifying Examination; working closely with government and others on the UK exit from the EU and further improving our systems and processes so we can provide better customer service.

We will be doing more on access to justice too, with the conclusion of our Legal Access Challenge [<https://legalaccesschallenge.org/>] , and new developments for the Legal Choices website we run on behalf of the joint regulators. And our new Solicitors Register will help to give people the information they need about solicitors and their practice.

Next year is a time of transition for us, as we move towards our 2020/23 Corporate Strategy, with a focus on high professional standards, harnessing technology and collaboration. We are currently consulting on the Strategy [<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/consultations/consultation-listing/corporate-strategy-2020-2023/>] and from next year we will be consulting on our annual work programme too. We want to make sure we understand the emerging issues and the views of stakeholders so we can respond and shape our work accordingly.

Money laundering

Tackling money laundering continues to be central to our work. It is not a victimless crime - it supports activity like people trafficking, arms dealing and terrorism. The legal profession needs to be at the forefront of efforts to help prevent it and we need to lead by example. So it was excellent to receive a positive annual report from our own Money Laundering Reporting

Officer. It was good to hear about close working with other agencies to tackle this problem, and thorough training for our staff.

Handling corporate complaints

Every year Board discusses a report from the independent reviewer's of how we handle complaints about SRA service. We will publish the report, but the headline is that it is a positive picture; complaint numbers are coming down and we are learning from what we hear. For example, we have learnt that we need to get better at managing people's expectations around how long it will take to investigate concerns about solicitors.

Overall, a busy meeting ahead of a busy year!

Note: we publish relevant Board papers [<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/how-we-work/our-board/board-engagement/>] soon after our Board meeting.